

Washington, DC – Today, Reps. Earl Blumenauer, Frank Pallone and Tim Bishop announced the introduction of H.R. 1596, the Superfund Reinvestment Act, to restore polluter-pays provisions for cleaning up America's most toxic and polluted sites.

"This Earth Day, we are reaffirming the commonsense idea that companies should pay to clean up their own toxic waste," **said Blumenauer**. "It is unfair to pass the burden on to taxpayers who bear no responsibility for the polluted industrial sites that threaten communities across this country. Without reauthorization, millions of Americans will be needlessly exposed to toxic waste while industries dodge billions of dollars in pollution taxes. It's time to put the burden for cleanup back where it belongs: on polluters."

"Reauthorizing the Superfund tax is important to everyone living and working in New Jersey because we have more Superfund sites than any other state in the country," **said Pallone**. "These toxic sites are a threat to public health as well as a danger to the environment. Reauthorization will provide Superfund with the resources it needs to clean-up sites fully, without unnecessary delay, and make the polluters pay the costs."

"There are three options to deal with toxic sites—nobody pays, everybody pays or the polluter pays," **said Bishop**. "Nobody pays is not an acceptable option because we cannot allow pollution to fester and endanger public health. Right now, everybody pays, which is unfair because every taxpayer and business is on the hook for the behavior of a handful of industries. The fair, commonsense solution is that polluters should pay. Let's remind polluters what we as parents tell our children—clean up your own mess."

Superfund sites are some of the most contaminated in the nation. 70 million Americans—including 10 million children, live within four miles of a Superfund site. They are exposed to toxic waste such as arsenic, benzene, PCBs, mercury and a range of solvents, leading to health problems such as infertility, low birth weight, birth defects, leukemia and respiratory difficulties. Communities that are home to these sites can face restrictions on water use and recreational activities as well as economic losses as property values decline due to contaminated land.

Before 1995, the Superfund trust fund was subsidized by taxes on the chemical and petroleum industry. When a large pollution problem occurred, and the responsible party could not be

found, could not pay, or refused to pay, the Superfund was tapped to pay for the cleanup. This program has resulted in the cleanup of more than 1000 toxic waste sites in communities all over the U.S., freeing residents from health risks and fears that come with living next to toxic waste.

Because Congress has not reauthorized the taxes, the cleanup of Superfund sites is paid for out of the general treasury. Without the contributing taxes, the Superfund has had less money available for cleanup work. This is happening as costs for work to restore Superfund sites are on the rise. In some cases, the EPA no longer has enough money to launch cleanups and can lose leverage to make companies clean up polluted sites.

The Superfund Reinvestment Act would reinstate the Superfund taxes on polluters to their previous levels. This includes taxes on the petrochemical industry and a corporate income tax of 0.12 percent on the amount of a corporation's modified alternative minimum taxable income that exceeds \$2 million. The President's FY 2012 budget, which calls for reauthorization of these taxes, estimates that they would raise about \$2 billion per year and \$20.8 billion over 10 years.